THE BI-MONTHLY

Newsletter of the Bisexual Center

Volume 1, Number 4 May/June 1977

NEW IDEAS

When we began the BiCenter, we worked collectively on our 1st philosophy and objectives statement, which has been distributed on our flyers and is included here. More recently we have formulated an additional statement which expreses our thinking currently. Hopefully, our statements will continue to change and expand, blending our personal humanism and our politics with our sexuality. The current statement is also included here. Please respond with support and loving criticism.

We are people seeking to love and share intimately with both women and men. Self-defined as bisexuals (although such labels are limiting) we are working to create for ourselves and others a strong sense of community.

We have been caught on both sides and in the middle of the homosexual-heterosexual polarity. We feel we have a unique contribution to make toward unifying polarities, equalizing relationships, and understanding the cycles of human sexuality.

We need a place to be ourselves, to be with one another, loving ourselves as we are and are becoming. The Bisexual Center will serve as a positive support base to facilitate communication, to teach each other by sharing what we are learning, and to explore the essence and potential of loving.

EXPANDED PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT of the BISEXUAL CENTER

1) The Bisexual Center is united in struggling for the rights of all women and men to develop as whole, androgynous beings.

2) We support relationships between persons of the same and other sex. These relationships may include relating emotionally, sensually, sexually, and intellectually. We also support persons choosing a celibate lifestyle.

3) We support people who have been oppressed because of sexual preference, gender, age, or ethnic group.

4) We encourage and support people struggling:

a) To bring about equality in areas of employment, housing, medical care, and complete sexual information

b) For the right to engage in the free expression of consenting sexual activity.

5) We support the open expression of affection and touch among people, without such expression necessarily having sexual implications.

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We will be having a regular column in the BI MONTHLY on the politics of bi-lifestyles. Please write a paragraph or two or an article.. or send a favorite of yours.. on topics such as extended families, triads, collective living, childcare, feminism, transexuality, celibacy, prostitution, the gay movement, and/or whatever other important issues you feel affect you in your everyday life as a conscious and concerned bi person. Send your articles, ideas, poems, quotations, cartoons, etc. to Jeanne pasle-Green c/o THE BI MONTHLY Box 26227, S.F., Ca. 94126

volunteers needed

The Bisexual Center needs volunteers in order to continue providing social events. The newsletter committee could use people who can type. If you are interested in working on the social events committee or newsletter committee please write The Bisexual Center, P.O. Box 26227, S.F., Ca. 94126

We Need A Place

If anyone has any ideas or suggestions for a location for the Bi-Center, let us know. We need a place which would be large enough for meetings and pot-lucks for approximately 80 people.

Please write BI-SEXUAL CENTER
P.O. Box 26227, S.F., Ca. 94126

note:

NEXT GENERAL MEETING:
May 15 7-10 p.m.

NEXT PANEL DISCUSSION
June 19 7-10 p.m.
at National Sex Forum
1523 Franklin, San Francisco

childcare

Childcare is an important issue for our community. We wish we could have this service available at our functions. Right now, however, we can't. Our present large group meeting space is being made available to us free as a courtesy from the National Sex Forum, and is not suitable for childcare facilities. We are optimistic, however, that when we have our own facility, space for childcare will be available.

THE BISEXUAL CENTER

P.O. Box 26227
San Francisco, Ca. 94126
(415) 781-8390

Co-Directors
Harriet Leve Maggi Rubenstein

Working Committee

John Claydon	Joan Israel
Margaret Cockrell	Jad King
Vicki Galland	David Lourea
Jeanne pasle-green	Pat Morgan
Evelyn Hoch	Vince Morgante
Nancy Isaacson	Mountain Raley
Steve Isaacson	Margo Rila

this issue

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PRODUCTION: John Claydon, Margaret Cockrell, Jeanne pasle-green, Nancy Isaacson, Joan Israel, Jad King, Harriet Leve, Lee Olivier, Mountain Raley, Maggie Rubenstein, Win Schacter, Mary Sorce.

membership

$5---Student, Retired, Unemployed
$10---Regular
$11-100---Contributing
$101-1000---Founding

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO:
The Bisexual Center
AND MAIL TO:
P.O. Box 26227
San Francisco, Ca. 94126

Name_____

Address_____

_____

Home Phone_____ Business Phone_____

Occupation_____

Skills_____

General Meeting

The March 13th general meeting was attended by many new people. After an introduction and a financial report, general participation was requested.

A representative of the Miami Gay Support Committee asked us to show support for Bi and Gay people in Dade County, Florida, by boycotting Florida Orange juice. Anita Bryant, who advertises this product and has become its' leading symbol, is leading an anti-Gay (and anti-Bi) movement to repeal a county ordinance banning discrimination in housing, jobs and public accommodations based on sexual preferences.

Following a break, people joined informal groups to become better acquainted with each other and the Center.

The meeting concluded with a general discussion on the diversity of bisexual lifestyles.

Every issue of the Bi-Monthly will include at least two personal close-ups of members of our Working Committee, until all of us have been presented.

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Steve Isaacson is an engineer/photographer/father who has spent the last ten years in a personal struggle to free himself from the sexist, economic and emotional oppression in our society.

A recent emigre to San Francisco from New York, I have found the city to be both stimulating and supportative of my personal exploration.

I have been actively working with the Bi-Center and its community for the past eight months and am presently involved in seeking out alternative modes of living and work, and dedicated to a continuing personal growth as a bisexual.

personal close-ups

Evelyn Hoch has a Master's degree in psychiatric social work from the Univ. of Chicago. I'm a feminist therapist living in Berkeley, and also work as a counselor and social worker in San Francisco.

Though I loathe labels, I'm committed to labeling myself as bisexual. This committment began four years ago when I fell in love with my best friend in Chicago, in a way I had previously thought I could only love a man.

This experience delighted me, frightened me, but more than anything, made me realize that for myself, as well as countless other men and women, the catagories of gay and straight simply do not apply.

I'm particularily involved in the media and speaker's bureau committee, and view the creation of bisexual consciousness as perhaps the best way of achieving non-exploitative, non-sexist human and love relationships.

Anthology

We are compiling an anthology on bisexuality, please send in articles, poetry, drawings, etc., to: Hogie Wyckoff c/o Bisexual Center P.O. Box 26227, S.F., Ca. 94126

Opinion Poll

An opinion poll has been enclosed with this newsletter.

Since we can best meet the needs of our community if we know how all of our members feel, please take the time to share your ideas by filling out and returning the poll.

We Get Letters...

Ed. Note: We feel committed to include as many letters and responses from the community as possible. We have decided that we would also like to include people's names at the end of letters. We respect people's right to privacy and encourage anyone writing letters, to specify if they prefer to remain anonymous.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am interested in getting further information about your Center, and possibly in making use of it, or some of the services which you offer...

At the present time I am asexual. With the exception of a period of about four months during the last year, I have been asexual for the past five years. In the past I have had sexual relations with both sexes, but right now I find it EXTREMELY difficult to seek out any type of relationship...

I can have a relationship either with a man or a woman, but there has to be some depth to it in order for me to appreciate it...

Oh, by the way, I guess that it is important that I tell you that I am a Pre-operative transsexual. From male to female. I am living as a woman, and have been doing so for the past five years. This is the main reason why my sexual life has been so barren. To go to bed with a gay man made me feel that he was only in the situation to be with a man - a way that I detest being treated. To find a female companion was almost totally out of the question and I never pursued it...

At this time however, I am at the point that I feel that I must find some companionship, and I feel that your Center is a viable alternative to leading a quite singular existance...

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain.

Very Sincerely,
Katherine Rosen

"Currently I am searching for my identity. I've tried to live somewhat of a homosexual lifestyle, but I feel very uneasy with only men. I feel a need for both sexes, but to what extent I'm not sure. I consider myself a Bi-sexual although, my sexual experiences are limited to males only." M.C. S.F.

"I am a man of 29 years, have lived and tried living in the strictly hetero-sexual and strictly homosexual worlds, and feel entirely at home in neither... and wondered where are the others like me who feel whole/complete, etc. only in relation to both sexes." N.K. Cotati, Ca.

"I am a bisexual man who, for the past couple of years, has been leading a basically gay life style. I'm tired of the gay scene, would like to meet understanding men and women." J.M.
S.F.

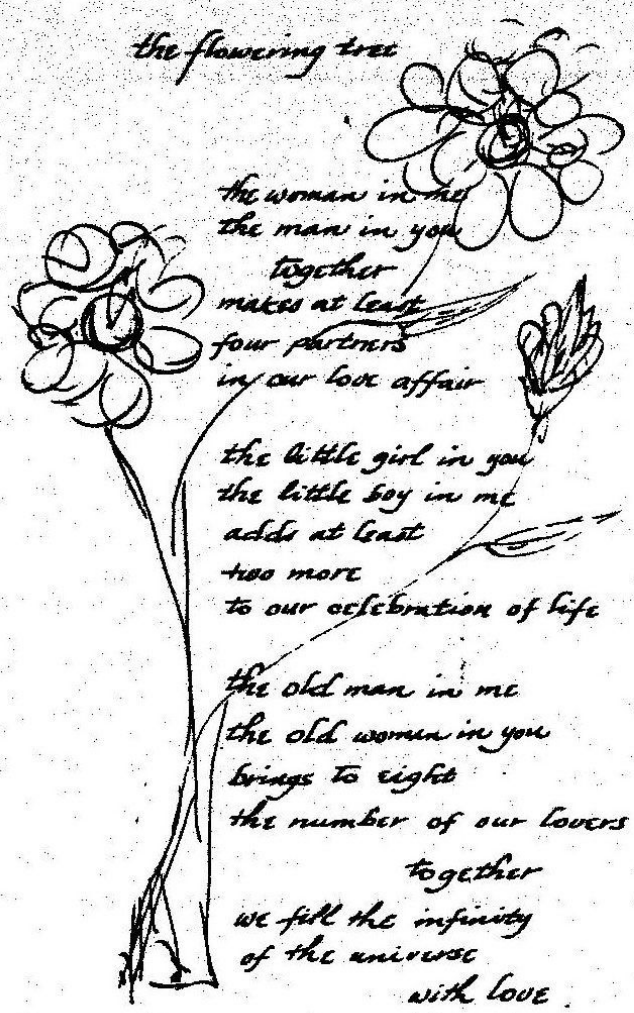
Reading through the eleven pages or so of the material explaining the Center and its activities, which you kindly sent me at my request, I noticed references to the promotion of "androgeny" (sic) by Ms. Wycoff, and the move "towards social androgyny" by Ms. Simpson. Nowhere did I see the words "transexualism, transgenderism or transvestism" used.

Am I to assume from this that the participation and contribution of this considerable segment of bisexuals is welcomed by the Center? Or is this omission a non-verbal attempt at maintaining exclusivity?

If you would be so kind as to reply, I would appreciate it very much."

Very truly yours,
S.A.D.

The Bi-Center welcomes all bisexuals and people exploring bisexuality. "Bisexuality and the Transexual" will appear in newsletter issue #5. Send any material to Jeanne pasle-green, ℤ Bi-Monthly, P.O.Box 26227, S.F., CA 94126



The Bi-Center has been sending a representative to the meetings at the Gay Community Center, 330 Grove Street, San Francisco, in support of the Dade County anti-repeal effort (see the article on the general meeting). If you would like further information, or would like to contribute badly-needed money, you can write to:

DADE COUNTY COALITION FOR THE
HUMANISTIC RIGHTS OF GAYS
P.O. BOX 414
MIAMI, FLA. 33133

Civil Liberties Research

The Center for Homosexual Education, Evaluation, and Research at San Francisco State University is doing a research project on civil liberties and sexual orientation. If you have had your civil liberties violated because of your sexual orientation (bisexual, homosexual, heterosexual) or social sex role (masculine, feminine) they would like to arrange a confidential interview with you.

This research project, one of many that C.H.E.E.R. is doing, is funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. The ultimate goal is to develop a body of knowledge that courts, legislatures, and institututions can use to protect people's civil liberties.

One of C.H.E.E.R.'s researchers is a member of the Bi-Center and is working with our Research Committee. Write to: Center for Homosexual Education, Evaluation, and Research; Psychology Building, Room 503, S.F.S.U., S.F. 94132; or call (415) 333-6117

Potluck. Party

The Bi Center will have a potluck on Saturday night, May 21 from 7:00-10:30 pm at The Townhouse, 412 Monte Vista, Oakland There is parking in the rear of the building, and children are welcome. We encourage our San Francisco members to join us for the potluck in Oakland. Please bring food to share.

On Saturday night, June 18 from 9 pm to 1 am, we will have a party at 48 Pierce Street, San Francisco. Please bring something to drink and munchies.

Space for future potlucks and parties is needed to accommodate 50-100 gentle people...contact Jad if you have space.

In order to raise money for the Bi Center we will be charging $1 admission for paid members of the Bi Center and $2 admission for non-members.

If you have questions, call Jad at 548-7805.

LOVING SOMEONE GAY

BY DON CLARK, PH.D.

I have admired Don Clark for many years. His positive article "AC-DC--the Bisexual" in the Humanist Magizine was an inspiration to me several years ago when I was formulating my own ideas about bisexuality.

Recently Dr. Clark has published an excellent book called Loving Someone Gay. It is useful for counselors, friends, and families of gays, particularly gay men's families, and for gays themselves. He has included in his book comments about bisexuals, and about labeling that speak of all of us who self-identify as bisexual.

One of the most prevelent myths about Bi-people is that our lives are easier and we are less oppressed than gays. Bi-people must deal, not only with the mental health view of us, described in the excerpt below, but also with non-bi-people saying that coupling and monogamy are ideal.

We challange these attitudes and say that choice is freedom, that people can have an enlightened conscious life regardless of their life style. We can choose to be coupled or monogamous, coupled and non-monogamous, non-coupled, or celibate, whatever fits for the individual.

The following is from pages 72-74 of Loving Someone Gay (Celestial Arts, Millbrae, Ca.)

"In the past couple of decades people in Western society have been more and more open about moving from one category to another (in some other parts of the world, good citizens have been seen doing it for centuries). Our faithful keepers of the categories, rather than consider decategorization, however, created a third category called bisexual. If the homosexual is a freak the bisexual is a super-freak. He or she is said by mental health professionals to have 'confused sexual identity,' which means behaviorally that the person will not stay still in one of the two categories. What it means in mental health jargon is that the person has not developed normally--has not grown up to a heterosexual or a homosexual but is emotionally somewhere back in very early childhood, sitting on the fence, unable to make the choice that permits maturation or to admit to the alternate preference. Even with today's official enlightened view by the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological Association, declaring homosexuals to be not emotionally disturbed, per se, there is professional concern about the person of "confused sexual identity." Most religions are a decade behind the mental health organizations and consider anything less than 100 per cent heterosexuality to be unacceptable. But at least the homosexual can be pitied. The bisexual is willfully unrepentant, sinful, and disobedient. The non-conformist is unpopular in our society.

Periodically there is a popularization of bisexuality. The media turn on the spotlights and see the people moving between the two categories and declare it a fad. Then they turn out the lights and report, with relief, that the fad is fading. Much print flowed about the phenomenon in 1974, for instance.

So there are three manufactured categorical labels that attempt to describe human sexuality (though it

continues to defy categorization). Unfortunately, it is not simply a harmless amusement. It is a destructive process. People are taught, and believe, that they should choose one of the two original categories and remain in it, or be classified in the third and consider themselves emotionally unstable. For those of us who have remained aware of our attraction to people of the same gender there is pressure to call yourself a homosexual (with all the stigma attached to that label) and believe that you are not capable of any satisfying emotional and sexual involvement with a person of other gender. It defines you as deficient, unable to do something. If you are aware of heterosexual attraction you are cruelly teased with the "hope" that you may make it and be honored as a heterosexual if only you can and will forsake the forbidden homosexual interest.

Gay is a descriptive label we have assigned to ourselves as a way of reminding ourselves and others that awareness of our sexuality facilitates a capability rather than creating a restriction. It means that we are capable of fully loving a person of same gender by involving ourselves emotionally, sexually, spiritually and intellectually. It may even imply a frequent or nearly constant preference or attraction for people of the same gender, meaning I (as a gay man) might notice more men than women on the street or might notice the men before the women. But the label does not limit us. We who are Gay can still love someone of other gender. Homosexual and heterosexual when used as nouns are naive and destructive nonsense in the form of labels that limit.

Our society has developed a Chinese-menu sort of defense in coping with the foolishly anxiety-provoking phenomenon of human sexuality. We are taught that we must choose from column A or column B. The truth, as any connoisseur of fine restaurants (whether Chinese or not) will tell you, is that the adventurous and selective diner orders a la carte and dines to his or her own personal satisfaction.

You would do well not to permit other people to assign you to a category. It is you who must decide when to drink red wine and when white. It is you who must decide the relative strength of each speaker in your stereo system. It is you who must pick your descriptive label, if any, and who must decide which individuals you will love."

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PLAGIARIZED FROM CHRISTOPHER STREET.

literature

The two books for this issue are both about women.

In WOMEN LOVING (Random House/ Bookworks, 1976), Ruth Falk has written a journal of -- as the subtitle puts it -- one woman's journey toward becoming an independent woman. By chronicling the changes she experiences in her loving and sexual feelings for women, she sees herself, and readers will see themselves. It is an especially supportive book for women who are examining those feelings in themselves. However, the individual verbatim interviews with five different women which she does are too long and become tedious, even though there are valuable insights contained in the many words. Recommended strongly. (This Random House book is available at local bookstores or copies can be purchased from Womyn at $7.95 including postage and handling. Make checks payable to Womyn and mail to Womyn/Falk, 3153 Lewiston Ave., Berkeley, CA. 94705.)

VIEW FROM ANOTHER CLOSET: A STUDY OF BISEXUALITY IN WOMEN (Hawthorne, 1976) is by Janet Bode. An "easy read", it nonetheless contains much valuable information. She administered a questionnaire to, and interviewed many women who called themselves bisexual. What emerges is a profile of an "average" bisexual: she is "well-educated, single and came from a nuclear unbroken home with heterosexual parents. She was the oldest or an only child, raised in the stereotypical manner regarding her role as a female."

What we find, however, thru the verbal self-portraits the interviewees paint of themselves, is that bisexual women are more like other women than they are unlike; that their bisexuality sets them apart by society's values, but they are comfortingly like other women essentially. Well worth reading.

Research Comm.

The Research Committee is meeting regularly and is formulating a questionnaire for later distribution.

The grant proposal committee is meeting regularly to formulate our status as a potential non-profit organization, and to design a budget for special projects to be submitted to various foundations.

bi radio show

On Monday evening, May 2, David Lourea will be the moderator for the "Get in Touch" radio show on KPOO, 89.5 FM. The show will be from 9:30-11 PM and there will be a panel of bisexual men. This is a talk show and you are encouraged to call in your questions and comments (864-5766).

Harriet Leve will moderate the show on Monday evening June 6.

workshops

On Sunday, May 22 at 8 PM, Ruth Falk, author of Women Loving, will talk and lead a discussion on "Process in Sexuality: A Look at Bisexuality." This will be held at The Townhouse, 412 Monte Vista, Oakland (there is parking in the rear of the building). The cost is $2.50 for members of the Bi Center and $3.00 for non-members.

Massage Day For Bisexuals May 21

Sat. 10am - 6pm. For women and men, a day of massage, relaxation and sharing. Flowing sensory awareness massage will be taught, focusing on the sensitivity of touch: will share sauna, pool and lunch. $14 for BiCenter members; $18 for nonmembers. $8 nonrefundable deposit due by May 18. Bring swim suit and towel and lunch to share. (scholarships available). Marin County.

Ray Stubbs is Instructor in Massage at the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality, and has led workshops through Esalen and centers in several states. Call him at 924-5742.

Community Bulletin Board

We want readers to let us know about events like those listed here -- you don't have to write it up, just send us all the relevent information. Also, if you want to arrange carpools to meetings or potlucks, invite others to a day in the park, etc., send us a note and we will put it in this column.

free rap groups

The Berkeley Women's Center Bisexual Women's Rap Collective sponsors a free open drop-in rap Wednesday, May 4, and the first Wednesday of each month. Raps start at 7:30 PM at the Berkeley Women's Center, 2112 Channing Way, Berkeley.

Friday, May 20, and every third Friday of the month, the Bisexual Women's Rap Collective sponsors open discussions at the Berkeley Women's Center, 2112 Channing Way, beginning at 8:00 PM, for women.

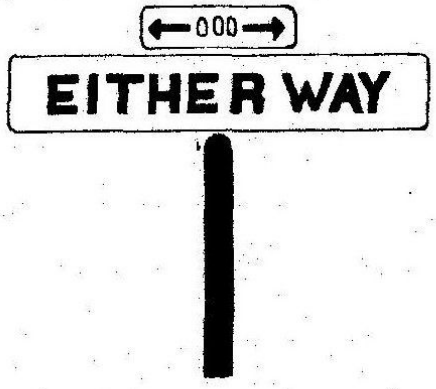
At the Pacific Center, 2339 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley (near Bancroft), Joan Israel facilitates a drop-in group for women and men on Tuesdays at 7:30 pm. On Fridays at 7:30 pm, Rita Cahn and Dianne Kramer facilitate a rap group for women to explore their feelings about their bisexuality and sexual identity.

On Tuesday evening, June 7, Harriet Leve will appear on KLAX to discuss bisexuality. The show will be from 7:30-8:00 PM and is on 90.7 FM radio.

Membership

There are presently 325 paid members of the Bisexual Center. We have $1200 in our treasury. Please let us know if you have any suggestions for increasing our membership and/or raising funds for the center.

We are proud to report that to our knowledge, we are the largest bisexual organization in the country.



a street in Boulder Creek

S.F.S.I. - RAP ON THE PHONE

If you want to talk at length on the phone about personal feelings, San Francisco Sex Information, 655-7300(open Mon. through Fri. 3-9p.m.), is available. Many of us are involved with the switchboard.

Speakers Bureau

On Thursday evening, February 24, the Gay People's Union at the University of California in Berkeley held a panel discussion on bisexuality. Representing the Bisexual Center were Harriet Leve, David Lourea, and Tralee Johnson, and representing the Pacific Center were Joan Israel and John Claydon.

On Monday evening, March 7, Janet Bode, Pat Morgan and Tralee Johnson appeared on Harriet Leve's show, Get in Touch, on KPOO. They discussed Janet's book, View From Another Closet; a Study of Bisexuality in Women.

On Wednesday evening, March 9, The Gay People's Union at Stanford University held a discussion on bisexuality. David Lourea and Harriet Leve conducted the discussion for the Bisexual Center.

On Tuesday morning, March 22, Harriet Leve appeared on the TV show A.M. San Francisco on channel 7. She was interviewed by Jim Dunbar on the topic of bisexuality and the formation of The Bisexual Center.

On Monday evening, April 4, Maggi Rubenstein, Hogie Wyckoff, and Lew Porter appeared on Harriet Leve's show, Get in Touch, on KPOO. They discussed the politics of bisexuality and dispelling myths of bisexuality.

On Tuesday evening, April 10, Ruth Falk, David Lourea, and Harriet Leve appeared on Jack Anderson's show, Process, on K101. They discussed Ruth's book, Women Loving, and the development of the Bisexual Center.

In March, Maggi Rubenstein spoke to the staff of the Sexual Trauma Center about bisexuality and the Bi Center and will be speaking with David Lourea, on April 24th, to the Singletarians at the Unitarian Church, Franklin & Geary, at 1 PM.

Maggi is also writing an article on Bisexuality by request of the Editor of OP, for Osteopathic Physicians, to be published this fall to raise the consciousness of 30,000 D.O.'s & M.D.'s who are involved in wholistic Health Care.

Maggi will be speaking, by request of Lester Kirkendall, past president of AASECT (American Association of Sex Educators and Counselors) at their annual conference, to be held in San Francisco in April.

Dispelling Myths

In the past bisexuality has been researched and written about by people who do not identify as bisexual. As a result of the desire to sensationalize and thereby sell written material, many myths have arisen about bisexuals.

Using our personal experience and what we learn from other members of a bisexual community, we would like to start a column to dispel misleading information. Eventually the research committee will be adding to the emerging body of information on bisexuality. Until the works of many bisexuals in the area of bisexuality are published, we would like to offer this column as our contribution.

1) Bisexuals can never be monogamous.
2) Bisexuals cannot have deep, meaningful relationships.
3) Bisexuals have to spend 50% of their time with women, and 50% of their time with men.

BI•MONTHLY CALENDAR

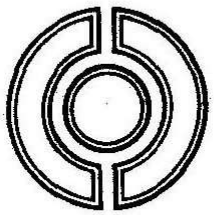
1977

MAY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2 Radio Show KPOO	3 Drop-in ♀&♂ Pacific Ctr	4 ♀ Rap Berk. ♀ Ctr	5	6 Bi-Rap ♀ Pacific Ctr	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Bi-Center GENERAL MEETING	16	17	18	19	20 ♀ open discussion Berk. ♀ Ctr	21 Pot Luck massage workshop
22 Ruth Falk Talk	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

JUNE

			1 ♀ Rap Berk. ♀ Ctr	2	3 Bi-Rap ♀ Pacific Ctr	4
5	6 Getting in Touch KPOO	7 KLAX Bi Radio Show	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Drop-in ♀&♂ Pacific Ctr	15	16	17 ♀ open discussion Berk. ♀ Ctr	18 Pot Luck
19 Bi-Center Panel Discussion	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



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